

Advent Devotional Readings



RENEWAL

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

*Christ by highest heav'n adored, Christ the everlasting Lord!
Late in time behold Him come; Offspring of a Virgin's womb
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; Hail the incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with man to dwell; Jesus, our Emmanuel
Hark! The herald angels sing "Glory to the newborn King!"*



Who do you look forward to seeing? For me, it's a combination of the people I know best and who I know are well-intentioned. Both of those are important. It's hard to get excited about seeing someone I don't really know. Or, you could be really witty and fun, but if it's generally at my expense, I'm still not getting excited. But if I know that you genuinely have my best interests at heart, then what I know of your personality draws me to want to get together with you that much more.

The same is true of Jesus. The more you see of him and the more that you see how much he is for you, the more you want to be around him.

This year for Advent, we're going to take the major epochs that God divides human history into and study how each context shows us a different side of Jesus as he relates to his people. We'll see his intentions in Creation, his response to our Fall into sin, his passion in Redeeming us, and his desires in the Restoration of all things.

Advent is a season where we practice waiting—of longing to be with the one who gave everything to be with us. Please join me in getting to know Jesus even better than we already do, so that our hearts want to be with him more than anything else.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Smith".

Pastor Bill Smith

Advent Season Sermon Series: *Who Is Coming?*

Sunday, Nov. 28 – What Is He Like? (Psalm 104:24–35)

Sunday, Dec. 5 – Why Did He Come? (Hosea 11:1–11)

Sunday, Dec. 12 – What Did He Do? (Micah 4:1–7)

Sunday, Dec. 19 (Lessons & Carols Service)

Are You Looking Forward to Him? (Matthew 2:1–11)

Friday, Dec. 24 – Have You Seen His Light? (Isaiah 8:19 – 9:7)

Sunday, Dec. 26 – What Is He Planning? (Revelation 21:1–8, 22–27)



What is Advent? The season of Advent came to reflect the waiting and expectancy that God's people had for the coming Messiah. It means "coming" or "arrival" and the church now reflects his *advent* in a four-week period in which the church remembers the promises of Jesus' first coming, and looks forward to his promise to come again. Just as John the Baptist told the Jewish people to "prepare" for the Lord's coming, we need to prepare his coming again in every season of our lives. During the advent Season, we encourage you to spend focused time in reading, meditation, prayer, and repentance. Take time to ask yourself questions that remind us of our need for a Savior such as:

- 1. What are the ways that I live as if Jesus never came, as if I have no Lover, no Savior, no inheritance?**

- 2. What drives, defines and delights me more than Jesus? Why am I lacking unbridled joy? What is it that I honestly believe that I need to be happy and satisfied apart from or in addition to Jesus?**

- 3. What difference would it make in my life if I truly believed that Jesus came for us?**

The season of Advent is a wonderful gift that God has given us to take time apart from a busy season that can be full of distractions away from celebrating our Lord. May this time be a fruitful, joyous, and thankful for the Light of the world who had come in flesh to save sinners!

ADVENT READINGS WEEK 1

First Sunday in Advent GENESIS 3:1–15 The fall of man. Despite the bleakness of the circumstances, God injects a strong note of hope in verse 15—the first prediction of the coming of Jesus.

Monday ISAIAH 9:2–7 Christ’s birth and kingdom are foretold by the prophet Isaiah. This coming King will be called “Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” Meditate on these four terms.

Tuesday ISAIAH 11:1–9 Another prediction of the coming Messiah King. Matthew 1:1–17 makes a point of showing us who Jesus’ family is because of the words of God in the book of Isaiah that spoke of Jesus as a “shoot from the stump of Jesse.”

Wednesday MICAH 5:2–4 A prophecy which both pinpoints the exact location of the Messiah’s birth, as well as telling us about his character and power.

Thursday ISAIAH 53:1–12 The great theme of this section of Isaiah’s prophecies is Jesus Christ in his sufferings. The kingly qualifications described in Isaiah are so matchless that only the coming of the Lord himself can fulfill them.

Friday MALACHI 4:1–6 This is a reference to the first and to the second coming of Christ. In both, Christ, the “sun of righteousness,” is a light to those who “revere his name.”

Saturday ISAIAH 60:1–22 A prophecy and description of the New Jerusalem—the future glorious state that Christ will usher in when he comes again.



ADVENT READINGS WEEK 2

Second Sunday in Advent GENESIS 22:1-18 God promises that through faithful Abraham “all nations on earth will be blessed.” This is astonishing, God is going to save his people through Abraham’s family.

Monday EXODUS 20:1-17 God first rescues the people from Egypt, and then he gives them the Ten Commandments. Keeping the Ten Commandments is not what saved them; God had already done that. God did not first give the Law and then deliver the people—first he delivered his people, and then he gave them the Law. Thus we are not saved by the Law, but saved *for* the Law. The Law is how we conduct our love relationship with God, not the way we merit the relationship.

Tuesday ISAIAH 40:1-11 The prophecy cited in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and John announcing that John the Baptist would be sent by God to prepare the way for Jesus.

Wednesday LUKE 1:5–25 The birth of John the Baptist is foretold to Zechariah.

Thursday LUKE 1:26–56 The angel Gabriel tells Mary of the incarnation. Mary is the first person who hears the name Jesus. She is the first one who gets the message that salvation is coming into the world through a baby who is going to be born in Bethlehem, the Lord descending into time and space to save us.

Friday MATTHEW 1:1–25 Matthew starts with the genealogy—who is Jesus, what are his roots, who is his family—and then tells the story of the angel of the Lord coming to Joseph in a dream. “Immanuel” is the name given to Jesus in this annunciation text. It means: “God with us.” Consider what it means that Jesus Christ is God and is *with us*.

Saturday LUKE 1:67–80 The birth of John the Baptist. Zechariah, John’s father, sang about the Christ, “Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come to his people and redeemed them” (Luke 1:68).

ADVENT READINGS WEEK 3

***Third Sunday in Advent* DANIEL 7:9-14** The Son of Man, who was prophesized to be given an everlasting kingdom of all peoples, nations, and languages.

***Monday* MICAH 4:1–7** Micah describes the New Jerusalem. The Messiah will be there. He will rule and all nations shall find peace.

***Tuesday* PSALM 98** The Lord will come again to the earth but this time as judge and King.

***Wednesday* PHILIPPIANS 2:5–11** In this amazing description of Christ and his mission on earth we learn that one day all will declare that Jesus Christ is Lord.

***Thursday* TITUS 2:11–3:7** In the future, God’s glory will appear when Jesus returns to this world in splendid power. We know that it will certainly happen, so “we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.”

***Friday* MATTHEW 25:1–46** Three parables about the kingdom of heaven, when the Son of Man comes in his glory.

***Saturday* REVELATION 5:1–14** John reveals the glory of the completed work of Christ—the exalted Lamb of God. The elder uses two special names to describe Jesus: the Lion of the tribe of Judah and the Root of David.



ADVENT READINGS WEEK 4

Fourth Sunday in Advent **LUKE 2:1–21** Luke tells the story of Jesus’ birth. The first people to hear the good news about the birth of God’s Son were shepherds.

Monday **MATTHEW 2:1–23** The wise men (Magi) find the King they have been searching for, and they give Jesus gifts and worship him.

Tuesday **JOHN 1:1–36** John describes the incarnation—the coming of the Lamb of God.

Wednesday **LUKE 2:22-36** Jesus is presented in the temple where Simeon and Anna have been fervently waiting, praying, and longing for his coming.

Thursday **LUKE 4:14-30** Jesus declares himself as the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy and begins his ministry.

Friday **REVELATION 21:1–27** John’s description of the new heaven and the new earth—our future home—where there will be “no more death or mourning or crying or pain.”

Saturday 1 **JOHN 1:1-4** John’s testimony of Jesus that Christians share with one another; the Savior of the world who came into our lives, manifested in flesh.